

AMENDMENT NO. 3862

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3862 intended to be proposed to S. 2248, an original bill to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978, to modernize and streamline the provisions of that Act, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3863

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3863 intended to be proposed to S. 2248, an original bill to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978, to modernize and streamline the provisions of that Act, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. REID (for Mrs. CLINTON):

S. 2549. A bill to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to establish an Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice to provide guidance to Federal agencies on the development of criteria for identifying disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority populations and low-income populations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. President, today I rise to introduce the Environmental Justice Renewal Act, legislation to address the issue of environmental racism that is faced by far too many Americans today.

In our country, we have communities predominantly racial and ethnic minority and low-income communities in which the air is unsafe to breathe, the water unfit to drink, the schools unsafe places to learn.

A 2005 Associated Press analysis of Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, air data found that African Americans were 79 percent more likely than their white counterparts to live in an area where the levels of air pollution posed health risks. About half of lower-income homes in our Nation are located within a mile of factories that report toxic emissions to the EPA. Hispanic and African-American children have lead poisoning rates that are roughly double that of their white counterparts. The evidence clearly documents the disproportionate impact of pollution faced by minority and low-income populations.

For more than a quarter-century, activists have been working to address this disparity in exposure. The work of residents in Warren County, NC, in protesting the placement of a toxic waste site in a predominantly African-American community sparked the modern-day environmental justice movement. Since that time, individuals in all parts of the United States have spoken out about the conditions in their own neighborhoods, and have joined to-

gether with schools, with churches, and with local organizations to create positive change in their communities. But they cannot act alone. The Federal Government has a clear role in reducing and eliminating the disparate pollution burden placed upon racial and ethnic minorities and low-income populations.

This role has been acknowledged by the Federal Government by individuals on both sides of the aisle. Under the first Bush administration, the EPA released several reports on what was then known as environmental equity, now called environmental justice. President Clinton promulgated Executive Order 12898, titled "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations," which directed federal agencies to account for the ways in which their activities would impact low-income and minority communities. The Federal Government took action to ensure that environmental justice was part of the mission of its agencies.

But under the current Bush administration, the EPA has not lived up to its motto "to protect human health and the environment." Because of their inaction on environmental justice, too many minority and low-income Americans lack equal access to protections that safeguard health, well being, and potential of children and families.

A 2004 report from the EPA's Office of the Inspector General found the following: "EPA has not fully implemented Executive Order 12898 nor consistently integrated environmental justice into its day-to-day operations."

In 2005, the Government Accountability Office released a report concluding that the agency has failed to consider environmental justice in making rules that protect families from environmental degradation and pollution.

In 2006, the Office of the Inspector General released another report on the EPA's environmental justice record, concluding that EPA senior management had not "sufficiently directed program and regional offices to conduct environmental justice reviews."

Earlier this year, the United Church of Christ released a report, Toxic Wastes and Race at Twenty, which stated: "Environmental Justice faltered and became invisible at the EPA under the George W. Bush Administration."

The Environmental Justice Renewal Act will address the rollbacks that have taken place during this Administration, and once again focus federal attention and resources on environmental justice.

It will revitalize the Interagency Working Group, IWG, on Environmental Justice, codifying the IWG and requiring biennial assessments of their efforts by the Government Accountability Office, to ensure that all agencies are completing goals and following timelines identified in each agency's environmental justice strategy.

It will establish new and expand current grant programs. With this additional funding, community groups can address the complicated health, environmental, and economic components of the pollution problems in their neighborhoods. The legislation will help states, tribes and territories develop and implement environmental justice strategies and policies. It will strengthen the technical assistance available to communities, by developing web-based Environmental Justice Clearinghouse.

This bill will increase the number of federal employees who have received environmental justice training, and who are able to incorporate environmental justice into their daily activities, such as permit review. In addition, it would establish a training program for community members modeled after the existing Superfund training programs to help affected individuals gain the skills needed to identify and monitor environmental concerns in their local areas.

Finally, the bill will increase public awareness of and participation in environmental justice activities, requiring the EPA to routinely hold community-based outreach meetings and ensuring increased interaction with the National Environmental Justice Advisory Committee, which represents stakeholders and impacted communities. It will also establish the position of Environmental Justice Ombudsman at the EPA, in order to receive, review, and process comments about the environmental justice work of the agency.

Groups supporting the legislation include the Sierra Club, ReGenesis, the Center on Race, Poverty and the Environment, Earthjustice, the Indigenous Environmental Network, and the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law.

We have neglected this issue for far too long, and it is time to once again ensure that the federal government works to reduce and eliminate these disparities that exist in our minority and low-income communities. I look forward to joining my colleagues in the Senate to get this enacted into law.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 421—HONORING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE FOR THE BLIND

Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself and Mr. BUNNING) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 421

Whereas the American Printing House for the Blind was chartered in 1858 in Louisville, Kentucky by the General Assembly of Kentucky through An Act to Establish the American Printing House for the Blind, in response to a growing national need for books and educational aids for blind students;